Terrorism and Political Violence

ISSN: 0954-6553 (Print) 1556-1836 (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/ftpv20

Bangladeshi Militants: What Do We Know?

Ali Riaz & Saimum Parvez

To cite this article: Ali Riaz & Saimum Parvez (2018) Bangladeshi Militants: What Do We Know?, Terrorism and Political Violence, 30:6, 944-961, DOI: 10.1080/09546553.2018.1481312

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1481312

Published online: 06 Jul 2018.

Submit your article to this journal

Article views: 1057

View related articles

View Crossmark data

Citing articles: 7 View citing articles

Full Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at
https://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?journalCode=ftpv20

TERRORISM AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE
2018, VOL. 30, NO. 6, 944–961
https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1481312

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Check for updates

Bangladeshi Militants: What Do We Know?

Ali Riaz[a] and Saimum Parvez[b]

[a]Department of Politics and Government, Illinois State University, Normal, IL, USA; [b]Department of Government and International Relations, University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia

ABSTRACT

Although militant groups have been present in Bangladesh since the 1990s, the country catapulted to international media attention on July 1, 2016, after an attack on a café in the upscale neighborhood of the capital Dhaka. The Islamic State claimed responsibility for the attack which killed 29 people, mostly foreigners. The attack came in the wake of a series of attacks on religious and ethnic minorities, foreigners, liberal activists, authors, and publishers by both an AQIS affiliate and ISIS. The government denied the existence of militant groups tied to international terrorist organizations. Despite these developments and instances of Bangladeshis joining the ISIS in Iraq and Syria, there has been very little in-depth discussion about who these militants are and what is driving Bangladeshis to militancy. This article addresses this lacuna. This paper examines the common traits of alleged Bangladeshi militants and explores the factors of radicalization. Drawing on media reports of the profiles of the alleged militants, between July 2014 and June 2015, and between July 2016 and August 2017, the article finds that most of the Bangladeshi militants are young, educated males increasingly coming from well-off families. We have also found evidence that four factors—social relationships, use of the Internet, personal crises, and external relations—appear most frequently in the narratives of Bangladeshi militants.

KEYWORDS

Bangladesh; Militant; Profile; Islamists; Violent Extremism; Terrorism

Introduction

Although militant groups have been present in Bangladesh since the 1990s and the country experienced a serious surge in attacks in 2005–6, the situation began to take a turn for the worse in mid-2013. Various transnational terrorist groups, such as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) and Al Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS), claimed responsibility for ghastly attacks upon religious and ethnic minorities, foreigners, liberal activists, authors, and publishers. The attack on July 1, 2016 by a group of youths connected to the IS on a café in the upscale neighbourhood of the capital Dhaka sent a shockwave through the country and drew international attention. While the government continued to deny the existence of the violent extremist groups' ties to international terrorist organizations, evidence mounted to the contrary. Since then, the government intensified its counterterrorism efforts, but security operations which resulted in the deaths of alleged extremists have also raised concerns about the disregard to due process. Despite the presence of violent extremist groups in the country for years, heightened

CONTACT Ali Riaz ariaz@IllinoisState.edu Department of Politics and Government, Campus Box 4600, Illinois State University, Normal, IL 61790-4600, USA

© 2018 Taylor & Francis

activities since mid-2013, and instances of Bangladeshis joining the ISIS in Iraq and Syria, there have been very few evidence-based discussions about who these violent extremists are and what is driving Bangladeshis to militancy. The profile of the July 1 attackers sent a shockwave through the middle class as it shattered the long-held (mis)perception that militants are produced by religious educational institutions, namely madrasas, and they tend to come from poor families. The café attackers came mostly from upper-middle-class families who were taught in "secular" educational institutions; some of them received education from outside the country too.

It is against this background that this paper maps the violent extremist organizations in Bangladesh, examines the common traits of alleged Bangladeshi militants, and explores the factors of radicalization. We ask two questions: First, what are the common socio-demographic traits among Bangladeshi violent extremists? Second, what are the factors that appear frequently in the narratives of the violent extremists? After analysing the newspaper reports, which include confession statements, interviews of the families and friends of the slain militants, and other available information published in press, we have found that most of the Bangladeshi militants are young, educated males increasingly coming from well-off families. We have also found evidence that four factors—social relationships, use of the Internet, personal crises, and external relations—appear most frequently in the narratives of Bangladeshi militants.

Mapping the militant organizations in Bangladesh

Identifying the militant organizations in Bangladesh is challenging on two counts: the absence of reliable data and the constant name changes of these groups to avoid being traced. Despite incessant discussions on "terrorism" in the past years, evidence-based studies are few and far between and reliable databases on Bangladeshi militant groups are non-existent in Bangladesh. The polemical political environment and a tendency to view the issue through partisan lenses have impeded the development of reliable sources. Press reports suggest that at least 20 militant organizations are active inside the country[1] and the law enforcement agencies identify about 12 militant organizations.[2] Between 2003 and May 2017, the government proscribed seven militant organizations: Shahadat-e-al Hikma (on February 9, 2003), Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) (on February 23, 2005), Harkat-ul Jihad al-Islami (HUJI) (on October 17, 2005), Hizb ut-Tahrir (on October 22, 2009), Ansarullah Bangla Team (on May 25, 2015), and Ansar al Islam (on March 1, 2017). Ansar al Islam, formerly known as Ansarullah Bangla Team, claims to be the Bangladeshi chapter of Al Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS). The Islamic State (or Daesh) claims to have a presence in Bangladesh. The government insists that the JMB was decimated by 2008 and it has now re-emerged as the Neo-JMB, a euphemism it appears to be using for ISIS.

Factors of violent extremism in Bangladesh

In the voluminous existing literature, leading scholars proposed different variables to explain causes of violent extremism. Some of these studies looked at a single variable, such as "individual/collective responses against occupation of the homeland,"[3] "social networks,"[4] "quest for significance,"[5] "relative deprivation,"[6] and "displaced identity"[7];

others proposed multiple factors which were likely to increase individuals' propensity to violent extremism.[8] Many terrorism studies also argue that the Internet plays a significant role as a driver of radicalization.[9] Some scholars contend that violent extremism is a process, and individuals go through each step in order, where the last step in the process is to use violence or participate in a terrorist attack. Moghaddam's six "staircases to terrorism"[10] and Borum's "four-stage model of the terrorist mindset"[11] are two important studies in this field. By contrast, Hafez and Mullins prefer the metaphor of a puzzle, where personal and collective grievances, networks and interpersonal ties, support structure, and political or social ideology engender radicalization.[12] They propose a "puzzle" metaphor and argue that just as with jigsaw puzzles' different pieces, the factors of radicalization are interconnected and only a combination of them can reveal a complete image. This proposition is significant because it highlights how the radicalization process is non-linear, multivariate, and contextualized. In this study, we look at the presence or absence of the common motivational and social factors that might trigger violent extremism in Bangladesh. In line with Hafez and Mullins, we also propose that violent extremism in Bangladesh is non-linear and depends on multiple factors. Moreover, we argue that the frequency of these factors might vary with contexts and enabling environments. Drawing from the existing literature, we test the presence or absence of key factors, namely social relations, external connections, exposure to online militant resources, and personal loss in violent extremism in Bangladesh.

The problems and prospects of profiling militants

In the 1960s, some scholars in psychology and psychiatry argued that terrorists are not "normal" and there should be some common traits regarding their personality. However, few empirical studies supported this hypothesis. In fact, the idea was rejected by scholars like Walter Laqueur, Jerrold Post, and Franco Ferracuti, who in general agreed regarding the non-existence of a "terrorist personality."[13] In contrast to the argument that terrorists are abnormal, research indicates that "normalcy" is one characteristic that is commonly found in terrorists.[14]

Two important studies looked at the sociodemographic aspects of the militants to examine whether similar characteristics can be identified. One of these two is Charles A. Russell and Bowman H. Miller's study on more than 350 urban militants of various nationalities. Their findings suggest that most of the terrorists were single males aged 22–24 who had some university education.[15] The second study, based on several hundred suspected British militants, argued that a distinctive profile of the "British terrorist" cannot be drawn. However, other studies have pointed to the common traits among the terrorists.[16] Guilain Denoeux and Lynn Carter summarized previous studies in four points: First, a "terrorist personality" is non-existent. Second, most violent extremists share some basic traits regarding educational level and socioeconomic status. These resemblances have tended to cut across cultures, regions, and times. Third, the educational and socioeconomic profile of that particular group of terrorists represented by Salafi jihadists has gone through important changes since 2003. Fourth, this trend toward growing variety in the socioeconomic background of jihadists is expected to increase in the years ahead. Like Denoeux and Carter, we too have found common traits and

motivations that are common across Bangladeshi violent extremist groups. We believe that understanding these patterns, traits, and motivations has analytical value for understanding Islamist extremism in Bangladesh.

Terrorism scholars, such as Silke and Horgan, also argue that focusing on "vulnerabilities" to terrorism is more promising and helpful than looking for any unique traits.[17] They view these "vulnerabilities" as the factors that can lead to a greater openness to becoming involved in terrorism than others. These factors act as either sources of motivation or mechanisms for embracing or reinforcing militant ideology. However, in this paper, we consider the arguments of both Denoeux and Carter and Silke and Horgan to get a more inclusive and complete picture of violent extremism in Bangladesh. We will, therefore, first explore the common traits the militants share and then turn our attention to the factors.

This study contributes to the literature surrounding violent extremism in several ways. Bangladesh is often ignored in the global terrorism literature despite its huge population, growing number of violent groups, and impact in global terrorism. Empirical studies related to Bangladeshi militant profiles are almost absent. This study collects primary data about militants over the years and provides a vivid picture of the motivational and social factors of violent extremism in Bangladesh. The acquired data helps to analyze the militant profiles and to understand the common demographic traits and presence or absence of the factors that might trigger militancy in Bangladesh.

Data sources

This study draws data from the daily and online newspaper reports published in two periods. The first set of reports of alleged arrested militants are between July 2014 and June 2015. The second phase includes the press reports on the killed, arrested, and missing alleged militants from July 2016 to August 2017, with a particular emphasis on the interviews of their families and friends, and the confession statements of the alleged militants during the interrogations by law enforcement agencies, some important parts of which were later published in the press.

The first phase of our research[18] analyzed the socio-demographic profile of 112 alleged Bangladeshi "Islamist militants" and presented findings on five broad categories: age, gender, occupations, levels of education, and the organizations with which these alleged extremists were associated. The study collected data from three daily newspapers of Bangladesh: *Prothom Alo, Daily Janakantha*, and *Daily New Age*.

In the second phase, we collected data from *the Daily Star, the Dhaka Tribune*, and *the bdnews24.com*. The reason behind selecting these three daily and online newspapers are threefold: first, these three newspapers cover the events related to violent extremism in Bangladesh extensively, and in particular *Dhaka Tribune* has published several investigative reports after the Holey Artisan attack; second, all three news outlets, two dailies and one online, publish in English, which allows us greater accessibility and less probability of misinterpreting data due to translation; lastly, the selection of three different news outlets from the first phase of our research provides this study more acceptability in terms of sampling, as it lessens the selection bias of depending on only three previous newspapers. We select July 1, 2016 as our starting point for data collection because of the occurrence of the Holey Artisan attack on that day. The Holey Artisan is the most gruesome and large-scale attack in the recent history of Bangladesh. The gunmen seized an upscale restaurant,

called Holey Artisan Bakery, in the capital and killed twenty people, most of whom were foreigners.[19] Besides these news outlets, some of the information was collected and crosschecked from other international news sources, such as *BBC, Telegraph*, and *Japan Times*. Altogether, we analyzed 127 news reports: 67 published from July 2014 to June 2015, and 60 published from July 2016 to August 2017. Besides examining the profiles of 112 alleged militants, we have conducted an in-depth analysis of 38 alleged militants on the basis of news reports published since July 2016. It brings a sample of 150 militants, which is commendable considering the dearth of empirical studies that have dealt with militant profiles globally.

Method

We employ both quantitative and qualitative content analyses for this study. For the first phase, we analyze the content of 67 news reports and employ a simple tabular analysis to explain the patterns of age, occupation, levels of education, and associated organizations of the alleged militants. The qualitative part deals with 60 news reports related to 38 alleged Islamist militants. We test presence and/or absence of the following factors: social relations, external connections, use of the Internet, personal loss, and sudden religiosity. We do an in-depth qualitative analysis on how these factors play a role in their pathways to radicalization. A combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods provides this study both depth and breadth.

In the following sections, first, we discuss the common traits frequently present in the narratives of Bangladeshi violent extremists. We present the common demographic traits: age, gender, occupation, level of education, and affiliated organization. Second, we explore the common factors found in the narratives of Bangladeshi extremists. Four factors—social relations, external connections, use of the Internet, personal loss and sudden religiosity—are closely scrutinized using publicly available data. In this paper, we do not intend to establish an explicit causal mechanism between extremism and the factors, as we argue that the radicalization process is non-linear, multivariate, and contextualized. Finally, we provide the concluding remarks.

Examining the traits of the alleged Bangladeshi militants

Among the 112 alleged militants, the newspaper reports published data regarding the age of 81 individuals.[20]

After dividing them into four age groups—below 18, 18–30, 31–40, and above 41—we found more than half of the sample (65%) were youth. If we broaden the spectrum up to 40, then almost all the alleged militants (nearly 94%) would be included in this age group (18–40). This finding supports the conventional wisdom that males, especially younger ones, are more prone to join in violent extremism than the older ones.

The data show that the violent extremism in Bangladesh is still male dominated and only two of the 112 alleged militants are women. One of the women is the chief of the women's wing of Jamaatul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), and also the wife of a leader of the same organization. The other arrested alleged female militant is identified as a student.[21] However, it would be misleading to assume that women's participation in violent extremism in Bangladesh is negligible. The women may participate in extremism as sympathizers,

supporters, recruiters, and safe housekeepers. The lack of visibility and low number of participants in direct attacks might be one reason for the apparent small number. Also, some of the recent developments show that women's participation in violent extremism in Bangladesh is lower than that of their male counterparts but not very limited.[22]

Occupations

The available newspaper reports identified the occupations of 65 alleged militants. The largest cohort in any profession is students. However, an arrest of 12 madrasa students together contributed to inflating the number of students to 21.[23] Among the remaining 53 individuals, 13 belong to the lower economic strata with manual jobs—including security guards, garment workers, rickshaw/auto rickshaw pullers, laborers, bus drivers, and fruit vendors, nine were engineers, nine were businessmen, five were teachers, three were imams, and two were described as IT experts. Interestingly, except manual laborers and madrasa students—25 individuals (38.4%)—40 individuals (61%) were from either middle-class or upper-middle-class backgrounds. It is also important to mention here that six of the arrested alleged militants were sons of former high-ranking government officials. The fathers of two alleged militants were former military officers, the father of one was a former navy commander, the fathers of another two were high-ranking civil service officers, and another was a former justice. If we exclude madrasa students from the computation (n = 53), as we are unsure of their family's occupational background, the percentage of middle and upper middle class jumps to an astounding 75.47% of the sample.

Levels of education

Apart from the 12 madrasa students arrested together, the other nine students are from mainstream secular educational institutions. All of these nine students were studying at the university level at the time of their arrests. One of them was studying in electrical engineering, one was a PhD candidate in sociology, one was a bachelor's student in chemistry, and another in business. Among the professionals, there were nine engineers, one of whom received a degree from one of the universities in Malaysia and others who graduated from renowned institutions within the country. Also, the nine arrested businessmen were well-educated. One had a master's degree in soil science and another one had a bachelor's degree in English. Two businessmen were reported to be technology experts. One businessman was reported to be a student of an "English medium school," which refers to an education system that follows either a British or American curriculum. We found the academic qualifications of one of the two arrested individuals who were described as the IT experts: he graduated from a private university in Dhaka. Intriguingly, five of these arrested business persons attended Cadet Colleges, and also one of the individuals listed in the sample as students also attended a Cadet College. In Bangladesh, Cadet Colleges are special academic institutions considered as the feeder for the military officer corps. They are known for their academic excellence and strict discipline. The main goal of these institutions includes producing "students capable of leading the country."[24]

Organizations

Among the total 112 suspected extremists, newspaper reports specifically identified the outfits with which 104 were either affiliated or wanted to be affiliated. In ten cases, the security officials did not provide any name of the extremist organization. A total of 25 suspected members of Jamaatul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) were arrested. Fourteen reported members of Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT) and thirteen members of the Harkatul Jihad-al Islam Bangladesh (HuJI), the fountainhead of all militant outfits in Bangladesh, were arrested. The reports also showed that two new militant outfits emerged in 2015: the Bangladesh Jihad Group (BJG) and the Shaheed Hamza Brigade (SHB).

Nineteen of the Hamza Brigade and eleven of the Bangladesh Jihadi Group have been arrested all through the period. The newspaper reports quoted law enforcement agencies claiming that the arrested members of BJG belong to ABT and HuJI. They were operating under a new name.

The alleged SHB militants were arrested in four different raids, one in April and three in February of 2015. However, the existence of the SHB was not known to the security officials until April 2015. On February 19, 2015, police arrested 12 madrasa students for suspicious activities, but couldn't identify which organization, if any, these students were involved with. But police claim that based on information gathered from these students, they arrested five more suspected militants. The arrests of these five militants revealed the presence of a new organization, but the law enforcers were yet to know of the name or organizational structure of this new group. In April 2015, another four suspected militants were nabbed by police when they came to know that they were operating under the name of the SHB.

It is interesting that the number of suspected extremists (22) who had been identified as members or aspiring members of the Islamic State was just short of that of JMB (25). This increasing number shows how the IS and its affiliated members had been growing strong during this period. Also, twelve of the suspected individuals were identified to be planning to join IS in Syria and Iraq. Moreover, the law enforcers identified one of them as the regional Commander of Islamic State in Bangladesh.[25]

In sum, the quantitative analysis of the age, gender, occupation, level of education, and associate organizations of the suspected militants shows several intriguing findings. First, the milieu of violent extremism in Bangladesh is young male dominated. Second, alarmingly well-off and well-established individuals are being attracted to violent extremism, contrary to the previously held belief that extremists generally come from the lower strata of society. Also, a large number of the alleged militants are educated in the secular, "English-medium" educational institutions. Lastly, both the homegrown and transnational violent extremist organizations are active in Bangladesh. The period (from July 2014 to June 2015) we analyzed shows the emergence of new violent groups with possible transnational connections.

Exploring the factors of radicalization leading towards violent extremism

Social relations: the allure of the nearer ones

Marc Sageman, in his two seminal studies,[26] examined the role of social networks, kin and friendship ties in particular, in forming a global Salafi jihadi network. He argued that "social bonds play a more important role in the emergence of global Salafi jihad than ideology."[27] Borrowing Canadian Intelligence service's term "bunch of guys," which the

organization coined after the Montreal-based plot for attacking Los Angeles Airport in 1999, Sageman discussed how isolated and alienated individuals come together and form strong social networks, often based around various social institutions, such as universities, clubs, or mosques. According to him, most of the terrorists had "pre-existing social bonds to members already involved in the global jihad or decided to join the jihad as a group with friends or relatives."[28]

Among the 38 militant profiles under study, the published reports provide data of 22 regarding how social relations played a role in their radicalization process. The types of social relations that contributed to their radicalization varies from relatives, teachers, private tutors, and friends to influential religious leaders. Among the 22 militants, friends or peers seem to be the most important actors in radicalization, as they influenced eight individuals. The second most important type of relationship is family; seven militants were radicalized by either their spouses, parents, or siblings. For example, one family, comprised of parents, their two daughters, and one son-in-law, went missing and reportedly joined IS in Syria.[29] The father was a doctor working at a hospital at Dhaka and the mother was a professor at a college in a Southern district of Bangladesh. One of the two daughters was married. The daughter and son-in-law were both students at a private university in Dhaka. The youngest daughter was a higher secondary level student studying at one of the renowned colleges in Dhaka. According to the news reports, the doctor is reportedly serving at an IS-controlled health facility in Syria. It is not clear who, among these five family members, played the crucial role in radicalizing the others. However, it shows how one or more family members could draw others into the slippery path of violent extremism.

There are cases when husbands also influenced their wives to accompany them. However, the evidence does not clearly indicate whether the wives willingly accompanied their husbands or not. For instance, one couple from Bogra, a Northern district of Bangladesh, went missing with their 18-month-old daughter.[30] They called one of their relatives in July 2015 and informed them that they were in Turkey. That was the last time they contacted anyone. In another example, one former employee of a mobile phone carrier, who also happened to be a singer, left the country in April 2015 with his newly married bride.[31] His elder brother informed police that the alleged militant left Bangladesh for a ten-day honeymoon trip to Malaysia. They did not return. After 15 days, the elder brother learned from their travel agent that the couple went to Turkey. After the Holey Artisan attack, the IS reportedly released a video titled "To the Knights of the Khilafah in Bengal" praising the attackers.[32] The militant under study was one of the three Bangladeshis who congratulated and praised the heinous murders. According to the SITE intelligence, a terrorism watchdog organization, the video was released somewhere from Raqqa in Syria.[33] The whereabouts of his wife are unknown.

In addition, it is intriguing how teachers and friends also influence an individual towards militancy. Among the 22, friends or peers radicalized eight and teachers radicalized two militants. The story of one militant is particularly interesting. This individual went to Japan from Bangladesh to pursue his PhD degree. With a scholarship, he completed his PhD in Asia-Pacific studies and joined Ritsumeiken University in Kyoto Prefecture.[34] He started teaching at the College of International Relations in April 2015. However, he had been absent without permission since January 2016, and subsequently was fired from his job in March 2016.[35] While studying in Japan, he married a Japanese girl. The alleged militant converted to Islam with his wife around

2006 or 2007, abandoning his previous religious belief, Hinduism, and taking a new "Islamic" name. According to Japanese intelligence sources, he was influenced to join the IS by a Japanese citizen, who was a former Doshisha University teacher.[36] This alleged Japanese militant also served as the Japanese ambassador to Saudi Arabia. It is reported than he joined the Hizb-ut Tahrir during or after the end of his diplomatic mission. Also, the IS Study Group, a Japanese research body, found evidence that he has involvement with IS.[37] With the influence of this alleged Japanese militant, the Bangladeshi militant probably embraced the violent path of extremism. Also, he might have motivated his wife to join him.

In another example, one Bangladeshi youth, who was later arrested by police for carrying explosives for a foiled attack, also told how he was lured to violent extremism by his private tutor.[38] In his confessional statement, he stated that he met a senior student of a Military Institute of Science and Technology and was deeply motivated by him. His new mentor started to convince him why he should participate in violent extremism for "ending injustice" on Muslims in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan. Later, the militant who was arrested for carrying explosives asked his father to appoint his "mentor" as a private tutor. His father agreed. It allowed ample time to convert him into an extremist. Later, his private tutor left for Syria through Turkey in February 2015 and was killed while fighting for IS. Even after leaving the country, his private tutor kept contact with him, which helped strengthen his motivations towards militancy.

Besides relatives, friends, and teachers, influential leaders can attract potential militants to violent extremism. For example, a 22 year old from Rangpur, one of the Northern districts of Bangladesh, was a Muezzin (a person who calls for prayer). The mosque where he used to work was inaugurated by the notorious JMB leader Siddiqul Islam alias Bangla Bhai. The youth came into contact with local JMB members and was motivated to work for them. Later, he left the job and went to Dhaka. Subsequently, police informed that he was turned into the Dhaka regional coordinator of JMB. In July 2016, the militant was killed, along with eight other militants, in the law enforcement agency's operation code named "Storm 26" in Dhaka. According to the Dhaka Metropolitan Police, he had trained the Holey Artisan attackers.[39]

The father of another alleged militant, who has been missing, blamed Mufti Jashimuddin Rahmani, former Imam of Hatembagh Mosque in Dhanmondi, Dhaka, and reportedly an ABT leader, for radicalizing his son. According to the father, although his son had been religious since his school days, he was not an extremist in his beliefs.[40] However, it is not clear whether the alleged militant was influenced by Rahmani by direct in-person contact or indirect sermons available on the Internet.

Moreover, some of the educational institutions may play a role in radicalization. Some label educational institutions such as North South University and Cadet Colleges as dens of terrorism. However, our study shows that extremists may have a concentration in some of the institutions for this period under study, but it is risky to blame the institutions on the basis of that premise. Previously, madrasas were identified relying on the same argument. We believe that we should look at a more micro level, because only small social clusters, comprised of friends, mentors, or acquaintances, rather than one entire institution as an entity, are more responsible, lethal, and effective in fuelling militancy by creating "in-group identity" in an individual.

Our findings show that social relations play an important role in radicalization. Among the 38 militants, we find data regarding social relations on 22 extremists; eight of them were radicalized by friends or peers, two by teachers, seven by family members, and five by influential figures.

External connections of terror

We have found data about 21 individuals who had some kind of external connections, be it organizational or personal. The most remarkable finding is that 13 of these 20 individuals either studied in, travelled to, or claimed to travel to Malaysia, or made their last connections using phone, skype, or other social applications from Malaysia. It is yet to be known why Malaysia turned into a favorite destination for the killed, arrested, and alleged militants.

Two of the Holey Artisan Bakery gunmen went to Monash University in Malaysia.[41] According to a report, one of the attackers stopped contacting his Bangladeshi friends after moving to Malaysia.[42] Also, the militants killed in Kallyanpur[43] and Sholakia Eidgah[44] were students of the same university. Moreover, the missing two alleged militants also went to Malaysian Marine Academy[45] and University of Creative Technology in Malaysia.[46] Besides studying, another two missing alleged militants went to Malaysia; one called from there[47] after he went missing for several months and the other left his in-law's house saying that he was leaving for Malaysia for "office work."[48] Also, the "singer-turned-into-militant"[49] claimed that he was going to Malaysia on a honeymoon trip but instead went to Syria via Turkey. However, there is no evidence if he first went to Malaysia and then to Turkey or went directly to Turkey. Lastly, the family which reportedly went to Syria told the caretaker of their building before leaving the country that they would first go to Malaysia and then travel to other countries.[50] Apart from Malaysia, five alleged militants are somehow connected with Japan, U.S, Saudi Arabia, Libya, and UK, one for each country.

The Internet and violent extremism

Numerous studies looked at the role of the Internet as a reinforcing agent that can break down the traditional barriers for aspirant extremists.[51] One of the prominent scholars, Precht, conducted an empirical study of 242 extremists from 2001 to 2006 and concluded that the presence of militant websites and other forms of propaganda on the Internet are correlated with growing radicalization.[52] Also, Neumann pointed to the Internet's ability to "reach" those individuals who were otherwise unreachable.[53] Hence, the speed, reach, and proximity of the Internet reduced the obstacle of distance in connecting radicals, extremists, or their sympathizers. In a similar vein, Briggs and Strugnell show how in conservative societies the Internet increases the opportunity for women who otherwise could not to become radicalised.[54]

Also, Schmidle suggests that the Internet affords the extremists greater anonymity.[55] In another vein, Bjelopera highlights the Internet's role as "normalising behaviours and attitudes that otherwise may carry a risk of being considered unacceptable or inappropriate in the physical world."[56] Perhaps the most well-known effect of the Internet is the "echo chamber." The proponent of this buzzword argues that the Internet has the ability to restrengthen people's beliefs by gathering together like-minded individuals. People

living in a virtual "echo chamber" become more extreme in their thoughts as the bubble they live in reinforces and justifies their extremity.[57] According to some literature, the Internet may give the illusion of "strength in numbers."[58] In sum, the scholars described the Internet as a reinforcing agent, echo chamber, and provider of greater reach, accessibility, and anonymity.

Among the 38 individuals, we have gathered evidence that 25 used the Internet, notably Facebook, Twitter, Wikr, Protected Text, and financial transfer applications, in some form or another. However, this rate could be even higher because the missing data does not confirm that the rest of the 13 individuals were not users of the internet. Some of them were very active users of the Internet. In fact, the father of one of the extremists killed in the Holey Artisan operation blamed the Internet as the main cause of radicalization of his son.[59] His friends informed him that the alleged militant's Facebook profile was filled with radical Islamist posts.[60] However, it is not clear if the extremist was mainly radicalized by the exposure to online content. The process can work both ways. Online content may radicalize someone or he could be radicalized offline and the online content further reinforced his extreme views.

Another alleged militant killed in the same operation was also an avid user of Facebook and Twitter. He used to follow one IS propagandist handle on Twitter.[61] However, he stopped using his publicly known social media accounts after he left the country in 2015.[62] There is no available information regarding whether he used social media by opening fake accounts and profiles.

Two key figures of the Holey Artisan attack, one based in Japan and another in Canada, both relied on the Internet besides traditional social relations to contact, motivate, plan, and implement the attack. Even during the attack, the assailants reportedly used Internet-based apps to keep their masterminds updated. Besides, in the Kallyanpur gunfight, when militants were surrounded by law enforcers and were getting prepared to fight back, they recorded audio-video clips and took photos and sent those to several destinations using the Internet. Even when they knew that they were probably going to die, they did not forget to exploit the benefits of the Internet. They disseminated their ideologies and were able to reach a large audience during that nerve-racking situation.[63]

The exposure to online militant propaganda contents may be an important factor for radicalization. In fact, for several militants the exposure to online militant outlets worked as a first step towards the path of extremism. For example, a 23-year-old arrested militant, who was involved in the Holey Artisan attack, became radicalized by watching the videos of speeches of ABT's spiritual leader Jasimuddin Rahmani and Al Qaeda leader Anwar al-Awlaki.[64] Later, when he had decided to participate in "Jihad," he contacted a student of Rajshahi University who helped him to join the organization. Quickly he became one of the key members and contributed to the Holey Artisan attack. According to the news reports, he was one of the planners of the attack. He also supplied arms, participated in the training of the new recruits, and was a member of the reconnaissance or scouting team. In another instance, an arrested Ansar al Islam member informed that he was first approached physically and then virtually.[65] He claimed that the recruiter often discussed the "injustice," "plights of the Muslims," and "jihad." Later, he was directed to open an ID on the protectedtext.com website. Using this website, he chatted about jihad with the recruiter. These online chats gradually started to strengthen his jihadi beliefs and he

transformed into a violent extremist within only ten months. Later, he participated in an attack that hacked three people to death, one of whom was a publisher.

Another confession statement[66] of a militant helps us to understand how the use of the Internet plays an important role in several stages of violent extremism; starting from generating an interest in violent extremism, sensitizing, and recruiting, to communicating after turning into a violent extremist. The militant under study joined a Facebook group, which posed as a seemingly innocent Islamic learning forum. A Bangladeshi expatriate based in Japan was the administrator of the group. One of the group members, who was a computer engineer with a degree from a Malaysian university, followed the militant on Facebook and understanding his interest, contacted him. Later, they met in person. After discussion, the computer engineer assured him that "if you want to go to war, I can send you to Syria." Then, the engineer gave him the Japan-based militant's phone number and told him that he would send him a "friend request" on Facebook. Afterwards, the Japan-based militant convinced him to go to Syria. Within months, he left the country for Turkey. The Japan-based militant also came to Turkey the next day after his arrival. The two militants chatted on Skype. Following the directions received on the Skype call, he crossed the border and joined IS. Even during the training period, he kept contact with the Japan-based militant through Skype. Also, during his first month at Raqqa, he contacted one of his Bangladeshi friends, who also joined IS, through the Wickr messaging app. After nearly five months, he came back to Bangladesh and was arrested by law enforcers in Dhaka. This confession statement shows how a "normal" individual could turn into a violent extremist and what role the Internet could play in the different layers of violent extremism.

Bangladeshi violent extremists also use Internet-based money transferring applications for financing violent organizations. One very important example is a Bangladeshi-born leader of the Islamic State, reportedly IS's director of computer operations, who was killed in a U.S drone strike on December 10, 2015.[67] According to one source, he was one of the top ten leaders of the Islamic State and head of the organization's IT and cyber division.[68] Before his death, he sent money to his father and younger brother for transferring it to an Islamist extremist organization in Bangladesh.

Another example was a Bangladeshi-born IS militant who went to London in 2003 for higher studies. After earning a degree in computer system engineering at University of Glamorgan, the militant opened an IT firm called Ibacs in Cardiff, UK. The Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit of Bangladesh police claims that the UK-based militant established a secure channel through which money has been sent to "New-JMB" militants, especially for financing the Holey Artisan attack. Even after his death, the "New-JMB" militants received funds through the channel set up by the Bangladeshi IS leader. In fact, U.S investigators claimed that this Bangladesh militant used to operate a global financial network which also funnelled money to an alleged IS militant in the U.S An FBI surveillance operation investigated and found that he used fake eBay transactions to send money. Also, his company sent five transactions using PayPal to a suspected militant in the U.S The FBI arrested a U.S citizen in connection with this transaction and suspected that it is one of the most important financial networks of the militant group yet uncovered. According to the law enforcers, he recruited his wife, father, two brothers, and the wife of one brother to the militant group. As one of his brothers moved to Spain, it is also suspected by law enforcement agencies that his brother might be responsible for financing the terror attack in Barcelona.[69] Bangladeshi Counterterrorism

unit CTTC has sent a letter to its Spanish counterpart via Interpol requesting arrest of the brother for his suspected involvement in terror financing.

Our findings show that the militants use the Internet for various purposes: communicating, propagandizing, planning, and financing. We also find evidence that the Internet plays an important role in several stages. Initially, the exposure to online materials generates an interest in radical ideology; later it sensitizes and helps individuals to join extremist organizations. In a later stage, once an individual finds like-minded people or organizations, the Internet makes it easier to communicate among them. However, online and offline factors often act together in radicalization of a militant. We have not found any evidence where a militant is solely radicalized online.

Personal crisis and sudden religiosity

Ami Pedahzur, in his seminal work *Suicide Terrorism*,[70] gave importance to "top-down influences and instrumental motives" and identified four main factors of radicalization: personal financial motivation; personal crisis; personal or communal revenge; and collective solidarity and ideological orientation. Among these, we found the "personal crisis" as an important triggering factor for violent extremism in Bangladesh. Other studies also show that personal crisis does play a role.[71] This is not to suggest that personal crisis solely causes militancy as a lot of people suffer personal tragedies but don't all turn into militants; instead we argue that personal tragedy can and does become one of the drivers.

A large number of the alleged militants became religious all of a sudden. Even individuals who were religious before they were radicalized embraced the jihadi interpretation of Islam. Often it happened due to personal losses, such as the breakup of affairs, the death of closest ones, or frustration caused by a broken family. Among the profiles under study, available data inform us that 11 were non-religious, and five were religious but were not intolerant. All of these 16 became extremely religious before turning into a violent extremist.

A sacked major in the Bangladesh military is believed to be the key operational commander of the Ansar-al-Islam, an Al Qaeda leaning militant outfit. He was sacked from the military for his involvement in a failed coup attempt in 2012. Later, he joined in the militant outfit. Police claim that he is involved in the targeted killings of secular writers, bloggers, and foreigners. His father claimed that he used to be a tolerant, moderate Muslim. However, he started to change after his first wife died of cancer and then became a hardliner.[72] Also, one of the alleged militants killed in Kallyanpur was inclined to religion after his mother's death.[73]

Another arrested militant in his youth claimed that the main reason for his involvement in militancy was frustration caused by the separation of his parents. He claimed that he never received affection or attention from either of his parents and left the house to join in militancy to "teach his parents a lesson."[74] A missing alleged militant, who used to play musical instruments in a teen metal band, had a history of drug addiction. One of his fellow band members informed that his mother died when the alleged militant was very young and he used to hate his father.[75] Besides deaths and broken families, bitter breakups could also trigger sudden change. A passionate singer, who made the top 15 of the country's most popular music talent show, *Close Up 1: Tomake Khujche Bangladesh*, suddenly changed after a breakup with his girlfriend.[76] After a short period of drug

abuse, he severed contacts with his friends. He started watching the videos of Al Qaeda propagandist Anwar Al Awlaki on the Internet, then quit his job. Later, he was found in a video filmed somewhere in Syria praising IS activities.

Conclusion

This study attempts to find the common traits among the violent extremists in Bangladesh by analyzing press reports published in recent years. Our findings suggest that militancy in Bangladesh is young and male dominated, with a growing number of individuals from well-off and well-educated backgrounds. Also, both the home-grown and transnational militant outfits are active in Bangladesh. The study shows an emergence of new violent groups with possible transnational connections.

Our findings also show that social networks, such as friends, teachers, family members, and influential persons, play a significant role in radicalization. Bangladeshi militants are heavily dependent on the Internet for recruitment, propaganda, mobilization, communication, and fundraising. Interestingly, a large number of militants went missing for three months to one year before surfacing as a militant. Our study collects evidence that in most of the cases, transformation from an otherwise normal individual to a complete militant takes only ten months to one year. The qualitative analysis supports the quantitative analysis that poverty does not necessarily cause violent extremism in Bangladesh, at least not in most of the cases analyzed.[77] However, personal losses, such as death of the nearer ones, or breakups, may trigger sudden religiosity, which in turn could trigger individuals to the slippery path of violent extremism.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Notes on contributors

Ali Riaz is a Distinguished Professor of political science at Illinois State University, Normal, Illinois, USA. He held the University Professor designation between 2012 and 2018 and was the chair of the Department of Politics and Government between 2007 and 2017. He has previously taught at universities in Bangladesh, England, and South Carolina, USA, and also worked as a Broadcast Journalist at the British Broadcasting Service (BBC) in London for five years. In 2013, he served as a Public Policy Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars at Washington D.C. Dr Riaz served as a consultant to various international organizations and appeared before the US Congress in 2013 and 2015 as an expert witness. His primary area of interests are political Islam, state-society relationships, madrassahs, violent extremism, South Asian politics, and Bangladeshi politics. Dr. Riaz's recent publications include *Lived Islam and Islamism in Bangladesh (2017); and Bangladesh: A Political History since Independence (2016). He coedited Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Bangladesh (2016) and currently coediting Political Violence in South Asia.*

Saimum Parvez is a doctoral candidate at the Department of Government and International Relations in the University of Sydney, Australia. He is currently on a leave from the North South University, Bangladesh where he holds a Senior Lecturer position at the Department of Political Science and Sociology. His research interests include violent extremism, online radicalization, digital media and politics. Parvez earned an M.A. from the Elliott School of International Affairs at the George Washington University, USA. His recent publications include a book chapter titled

"Terrorism and Counterterrorism in Bangladesh" in the Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Bangladesh (2016). He has made presentations at various international conferences.

Notes

1. "Only 6 of 20 Active Militant Organizations are Banned" (in Bengali), *jagonews24,com*, June 4, 2016, https://www.jagonews24.com/special-reports/news/102972 (accessed September 22, 2017).
2. "12 Militant Organizations to be Banned" (in Bengali), *Kaler Kantha*, April 17, 2017, http://www.kalerkantho.com/print-edition/last-page/2017/04/17/487523 (accessed September 23, 2017).
3. Robert Pape, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terror* (New York: Random House, 2005).
4. M. Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).
5 A. W. Kruglanski, M. J. Gelfand, J. J. Bélanger, A. Sheveland, M. Hetiarachchi, and R. Gunaratna, "The Psychology of Radicalization and Deradicalization: How Significance Quest Impacts Violent Extremism," *Political Psychology* 35 (2014): 69–93.
6. T. R. Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970).
7. Olivier Roy, *Globalised Islam: The Search for a New Umma* (London: Hurst, 2004).
8. Ami Pedahzur, *Suicide Terrorism* (Malden, MA: Polity, 2005).
9. Anne Stenersen, "The Internet: A Virtual Training Camp?," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20, no. 2 (2008): 215–33.; Shuo Zeng, Mingfeng Lin, and Hsinchun Chen, "Dynamic User-level Affect Analysis in Social Media: Modeling Violence in the Dark Web" (paper presented at the IEEE European Intelligence and Security Informatics Conference, Athens, Greece, September 12–14, 2011); David H. Gray and Albon Head, "The Importance of the Internet to the Post-modern Terrorist and its Role as a Form of Safe Haven," *European Journal of Scientific Research* 25, no. 3 (2009): 396–404; Rachel Briggs and Jonathan Birdwell, "Radicalisation among Muslims in the UK" (Policy Working Paper 7, MICROCON, London, 2009); Rachel Briggs and Alex Strugnell, "Radicalisation: The Role of the Internet" (Policy Planners' Network Working Paper, Institute for Strategic Dialogue, London, 2011).
10. F. M. Moghaddam, "The Staircase to Terrorism: A Psychological Exploration," *American Psychologist* 60 (2005): 161–9.
11. Randy Borum, "Radicalization into Violent Extremism II: A Review of Conceptual Models and Empirical Research," *Journal of Strategic Security* 4, no. 4 (2011): 37–62.
12. Mohammed Hafez and Creighton Mullins, "The Radicalization Puzzle: A Theoretical Synthesis of Empirical Approaches to Homegrown Extremism," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 38, no. 11 (2015): 958–75.
13. Walter Laqueur, *Terrorism* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1977), 129; Jerrold M. Post, "Individual and Group Dynamics of Terrorist Behavior" (World Congress of Psychiatry, Psychiatry: The State of the Art, 6, New York: Plenum, 1985); Franco Ferracuti, "A Psychiatric Comparative—Analysis of Left and Right Terrorism in Italy" (World Congress of Psychiatry, Psychiatry: The State of the Art, 6, New York: Plenum, 1985), and "A Sociopsychiatric Interpretation of Terrorism," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 463 (September 1982): 129–41.
14. P. Gill, "A Multi-Dimensional Approach to Suicide Bombing," *International Journal of Conflict and Violence* 1, no. 2 (2007): 142–59; A. Silke, "Holy Warriors: Exploring the Psychological Processes of Jihadi Radicalization," *European Journal of Criminology* 5, no. 1 (2008): 99–123.
15. Charles A. Russell and Bowman H. Miller, "Profile of a Terrorist," *Terrorism: An International Journal* 1, no. 1 (1977): 31.
16. Louise Richardson, *What Terrorists Want* (New York: Random House, 2006); Gilles Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and Pharaoh* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1986); Alan B. Kruger, *What Makes a Terrorist* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).
17. Andrew Silke, *The Psychology of Counter-Terrorism* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 20.

18. Ali Riaz, "Who Are the Bangladeshi 'Islamist Militants'?" Perspectives on Terrorism 10, no. 1 (2016). http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/485 (accessed December 5, 2017)
19. "Bangladesh Siege: Twenty Killed at Holey Artisan Bakery in Dhaka," *BBC*, July 2, 2016, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-36692613 (accessed September 15, 2017).
20. The authors checked other newspapers to determine the age of those missing in these newspaper reports.
21. Despite the 20-year-old woman's affiliation with a mainstream political party (Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami), we have treated her as an extremist as it was reported by the law enforcers.
22. Nazneen Mohsina, "Growing Trends of Female Jihadism in Bangladesh," *The Diplomat*, March 24, 2017, http://thediplomat.com/2017/03/growing-trends-of-female-jihadism-in-bangladesh/ (accessed September 5, 2017).
23. According to the newspaper reports, 22 were initially arrested, but 10 were released as no evidence was found against them.
24. Currently the number of Cadet Colleges in the country is 12, 9 for male, and 3 for females. Prior to the liberation in 1971, the country had 4.
25. "4 ISIS Suspects Arrested, Placed on 5-day Remand," *New Age*, January 20, 2015, http://newagebd.net/87681/4-isis-suspects-arrested-placed-on-5-dayremand/#sthash.mjTefU62.0QNJekOD.dpuf. (accessed September 15, 2017).
26. M. Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (see note 4).
27. Sageman *Leaderless Jihad* (see note 26), 178.
28. Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*,(see note 4), 113.
29. "Decision Beats the Wits," *The Daily Star*, July 21, 2016, http://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/decision-beats-the-wits-1256941 (accessed September 15, 2017).
30. "Bogra Barrister, Wife Missing for 16 Months," *The Daily Star*, August 5, 2016, http://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/bogra-barrister-wife-missing-16-months-1264972 (accessed September 12, 2017).
31. Akram Hosen, "He Went to Turkey on 'Honeymoon,'" *The Daily Star*, July 21, 2016, http://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/he-went-turkey-honeymoon-1256926 (accessed September 15, 2017).
32. "From Music Lover to 'Militant,'" *The Daily Star*, July 13, 2016, http://www.thedailystar.net/dhaka-attack/music-lover-militant-1253047 (accessed September 11, 2017).
33. Ibid.
34. "Bangladeshi Who Taught at Ritsumeikan among 10 Suspects Wanted by Police over Dhaka Attack: Sources," *The Japan Times*, July 21, 2016, https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/07/21/national/crime-legal/missing-bangladeshi-taught-ritsumeikan-among-10-islamic-state-suspects-dhaka-attack-sources/#.Wb9yzEZ96Uk (accessed September 16, 2017).
35. Ibid.
36. SM Nadim Mahmud, "Saifullah Ojaki Believed to Have Joined IS with Family and Children: Reports," *bdnews24.com*, July 21, 2016, http://bdnews24.com/bangladesh/2016/07/21/saifullah-ojaki-believed-to-have-joined-is-with-family-and-children-reports (accessed September 4, 2017).
37. Ibid.
38. Nuruzzaman Labu, "Detained Terrorists Tells Whole Story of his 372 Days in Hideouts," *Dhaka Tribune*, August 11, 2017, http://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/crime/2017/08/11/detained-terrorist-tells-whole-story-372-days-hideouts-2/ (accessed September 4, 2017).
39. Kongkon Karmaker, "Trainer of Gulshan Café Attackers among Dead," *The Daily Star*, July 29, 2016, http://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/trainer-gulshan-caf%C3%A9-attackers-among-dead-1261030 (accessed September 17, 2017).
40. Rashidul Hasan, "Drawn into Militancy by Mufti Jashim," *The Daily Star*, July 21, 2016, http://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/drawn-militancy-mufti-jashim-1256923 (accessed September 6, 2017).
41. "Who Are They?," *The Daily Star*, July 4, 2016, http://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/who-are-they-1250065 (accessed September 7, 2017).

42. "Five Terrorists Unmasked," *Dhaka Tribune*, July 5, 2016, http://archive.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/2016/jul/05/five-terrorists-unmasked#sthash.GIbyIEIa.dpuf (accessed September 8, 2017).
43. "Who Is This Arko?," *Dhaka Tribune*, July 28, 2016, http://archive.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/2016/jul/28/who-arko (accessed September 15, 2017).
44. "Sholakia Attack: Cops Say Dead 'Attacker' Missing Dhaka Student," *Dhaka Tribune*, July 8, 2016, http://www.thedailystar.net/country/dead-sholakia-attacker-identified-missing-dhaka-student-1250965. (accessed September 15, 2017).
45. Arun Bikash Dey, "A Marine Engr, He 'Left for Iraq to Join IS,'" *The Daily Star*, July 21, 2016, http://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/marine-engr-he-left-iraq-join-1256932 (accessed September 21, 2017).
46. "Once a Bass Guitarist in a Rock Band," *The Daily Star*, July 21, 2016, http://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/once-bass-player-rock-band-1256935 (accessed September 9, 2017).
47. Hasan, "Drawn into militancy by Mufti Jashim" (see note 40).
48. "He Left for KL, Did Not Return," *The Daily Star*, July 21, 2016, http://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/left-kl-did-not-return-1256914 (accessed September 16, 2017).
49. Hosen, "He Went to Turkey on 'Honeymoon'" (see note 31).
50. "Decision Beats the Wits" (see note 29).
51. Raffaello Pantucci, "A Typology of Lone Wolves: Preliminary Analysis of Lone Islamist Terrorists," *Developments in Radicalisation and Political Violence*, International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence, 2011, http://icsr.info/2011/04/a-typology-of-lone-wolves-preliminary-analysis-of-lone-islamist-terrorists/ (accessed September 16, 2017).
52. Tomas Precht, *Homegrown Terrorism and Islamist Radicalisation in Europe: From Conversion to Terrorism. An Assessment of the Factors Influencing Violent Islamist Extremism and Suggestions for Counter Radicalisation Measures* (Copenhagen: Danish Ministry of Defence, 2008).
53. Peter R. Neumann, "Options and Strategies for Countering Online Radicalization in the United States," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 36, no. 6 (2013).
54. Rachel Briggs and Alex Strugnell, "Radicalisation: The Role of the Internet" (Policy Planners' Network Working Paper, Institute for Strategic Dialogue, London, 2011).
55. Robert E. Schmidle, "Positioning Theory and Terrorist Networks," *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 40, no. 1 (2009): 65–78.
56. Jerome P. Bjelopera, "American Jihadist Terrorism: Combating a Complex Threat" (Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, Washington, DC: Congress Research Service, 2011).
57. Tim Stevens and Peter R. Neumann, *Countering Online Radicalisation: A Strategy for Action* (London: International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence, 2009); Kumar Ramakrishna, "Self-radicalisation and the Awlaki Connection," *S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies*, 2010, https://www.rsis.edu.sg/rsis-publication/cens/1365-self-radicalisation-and-the-aw/#.WcS6K0Z96Uk (accessed September 16, 2017); Mitchell D. Silber and Arvin Bhatt, *Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat* (New York: New York City Police Department, 2007). https://publicintelligence.net/nypd-radicalization-in-the-west-the-homegrown-threat/ (accessed September 16, 2017); Mohamed Abdul Saddiq, "Whither e-Jihad: Evaluating the Threat of Internet Radicalisation," *S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies*, 2010, http://dr.ntu.edu.sg/bitstream/handle/10220/6646/RSIS0832010.pdf?sequence=1 (accessed September 16, 2017).
58. Saddiq, "Whither e-Jihad" (see note 57).
59. Sanjoy Majumder, "Bangladesh Attack: Searching for the 'Affluent Jihadists,'" *BBC News*, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36710177 (accessed September 16, 2017).
60. "Attacker Nibras' Family Apologises to All," *The Daily Star*, July 6, 2016, http://www.thedailystar.net/dhaka-attack/attacker-nibras-family-apologises-all-1250752 (accessed September 16, 2017).
61. "Bangladesh Attack: Shock over 'Elite' Holey Cafe Suspects," *BBC*, July 4, 2016, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-36704853 (accessed September 16, 2017).
62. Ibid.
63. Zayadul Ahsan, "Glimpses into 'Jihadi' Minds," *The Daily Star*, August 2, 2016, http://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/glimpses-jihadi-mind-1263262 (accessed September 16, 2017).

64. Nuruzzaman Labu, "How Rashed Got Involved in Terrorism," *Dhaka Tribune*, July 29, 2017, http://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/crime/2017/07/29/how-rashed-got-involved-in-terrorism/ (accessed September 16, 2017).
65. Zayadul Ahsan, "Terrorist in 10 Months," *The Daily Star*, July 24, 2016, http://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/terrorist-10-months-1258498. (accessed September 16, 2017).
66. Zayadul Ahsan, "Dhaka-Syria-Dhaka," *The Daily Star*, February 3, 2017, http://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/dhaka-syria-dhaka-1355287 (accessed September 16, 2017).
67. Nuruzzaman Labu, "Sadarghat 256: Bangladeshi-born IS Leader's Code for Militant Financing," *Dhaka Tribune*, August 23, 2017, http://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/crime/2017/08/23/sadarghat-code-militant-financing/ (accessed September 16, 2017).
68. "Bangladeshi Militant Used eBay to Fund Terrorist Activities, FBI Finds," *Dhaka Tribune*, August 11, 2017, http://www.dhakatribune.com/world/2017/08/11/bangladeshi-militant-used-ebay-fund-terrorist-activities-fbi-finds/ (accessed September 16, 2017).
69. Ibid.
70. Pedhazur, *Suicide Terrorism* (see note 8).
71. See Wiktorowicz, Rambo, Nuraniyah, and Osman in this issue.
72. "Major Zia Used UK Mobile SIM to Talk to Officers," *The Daily Star*, January 21, 2012, http://www.thedailystar.net/news-detail-219282 (accessed September 16, 2017).
73. Devadeep Purohit, "Believe-it-or-not 'Terror' Face—Millionaire's US-returned Son among Those Killed in Dhaka Raid," *Telegraph India*, July 27, 2016, http://www.telegraphindia.com/1160728/jsp/frontpage/story_99186.jsp#.WBd9FNKLRdg (accessed September 16, 2017).
74. Labu, "Detained Terrorists Tells Whole Story" (see note 38).
75. *The Daily Star* (see note 45 above).
76. Hosen, "He Went to Turkey on 'Honeymoon'" (see note 31).
77. We also tested mental illness, poverty, and displaced identity and our sample showed no evidence that these factors played a role.